

**HEARING AID DISPENSERS BUREAU**

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Child & Spousal Support Law May Affect Applicants for Licensure and License Renewal

Senate Bill 101 was passed on July 12, 1991 and went into effect on July 1, 1992. This law has many provisions affecting child and spousal support; most notable among them is the provision that professional licensees will not be able to obtain or renew licenses if they are delinquent in making support payments.

The provisions of this law apply to state agencies, like the Hearing Aid Dispensers Bureau and their licensees. Any applicant for a hearing aid dispenser's license or licensed dispenser not in compliance with an order for spousal or child support may not be eligible for the issuance or renewal of his or her hearing aid dispenser's license. A support debtor is considered to be non-compliant if he or she is more than 30 days in arrears in making payments in full for current support, in making periodic payments on a support arrearage, or in making periodic payments on a reimbursement for public assistance as set forth in a judgment or order for support.

The law provides various steps in the denial and non-renewal processes, including a 60-day period for the support debtor to respond to the District Attorney to obtain a review of the order for support and a judicial hearing. If there is no review or hearing or if the review or hearing does not alter the order for support, then the bureau will be prohibited from issuing or renewing the license until it receives a copy of a release from the State Department of Social Services (DSS) stating that the obligation has been met. The district attorneys will supply a list of support debtors to DSS.

In the short run, individuals with large support arrearage payments may find that their means of income to pay off the support is no longer available-- obviously, this will not solve the problem. Legislators hope, however, that in the long run this law will encourage individuals to pay the required support and not to develop large support arrearages.

Hearing aid dispensers and applicants for licensure who may be behind in support payments are urged to deal with the problem promptly.